



Elevate<sup>TM</sup>

Elevating  
the internationalisation  
of higher education  
in Moldova

HANDBOOK



# Elevate<sup>™</sup>

Elevating the internationalisation of higher education in Moldova

Project Acronym:	ELEVATE
Project full title:	ELEVATING THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN MOLDOVA
Project No:	573921-EPP-1-2016-1-MD-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP
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Coordinator:	ASEM – Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova
Project start date:	October 15, 2016
Project duration:	36 months

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## **DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET**

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## **VERSIONING AND CONTRIBUTION HISTORY**

Version	Date	Revision Description	Responsible Partner
v.01	22/01/2016	The first version of the document structure, done by the WP7 team	P1-ASEM
v.02	22/03/2017	Completed draft version / The document presented in the template	P1-ASEM
v.03	10/09/2017	Consolidated version of the document	P1-ASEM

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# 1. CONSORTIUM MEMBERS

## Lead Partner



Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova  
(ASEM) ([www.ase.md](http://www.ase.md))

## EU partners



The Maastricht Graduate School of  
Governance (UM.MGSOG)  
([www.maastrichtuniversity.nl](http://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl))



Mykolas Romeris University (MRU)  
([www.mruni.eu](http://www.mruni.eu))



Buckinghamshire New University (BUCKS)  
([www.bucks.ac.uk](http://www.bucks.ac.uk))



University of Maribor (UM) ([www.um.si](http://www.um.si))



European Policy Development and Research  
Institute (EPDRI) ([www.epdri.si](http://www.epdri.si))

## PC Partners



The Technical University of Moldova (TUM)  
([www.utm.md](http://www.utm.md))



State Agrarian University of Moldova (SAUM)  
([www.uasm.md](http://www.uasm.md))



Alecu Russo State University of Balti (USARB)  
([www.usarb.md](http://www.usarb.md))



Cahul State University "Bogdan Petriceicu  
Hasdeu" (USC) ([www.usc.md](http://www.usc.md))



Comrat State University (KDU) ([www.kdu.md](http://www.kdu.md))



The National Council of Rectors of Moldova  
(NRCM)



The Ministry of Education of the Republic of  
Moldova (MERM) ([www.gov.edu.md](http://www.gov.edu.md))

## Associated partners







TRIMETRICA" S.R.L. (TR)  
([www.trimetrica.com](http://www.trimetrica.com))

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

The ELEVATE project's Handbook has been produced to facilitate the navigation through the events conducted during the project and to offer a guide on what documents are to be submitted, how to be completed, the deadlines and in general to offer assistance with the management of the project.

The handbook must be read in conjunction with the official approved documents that have been made available to all partners:

-  EACEA – ELEVATE project Grant Agreement
-  ELEVATE project's Partnership Agreements
-  EACEA - Guidelines for the Use of Grants
-  EACEA - Frequently Asked Questions

We strongly encourage all partners to read carefully all of the above documents and to familiarise themselves with the aims, objectives and activities of the project.

## **3. PROJECT DETAILS**

### **3.1 Strategic objective**

ELEVATE projects aims to develop and implement meaningful, transparent and far-reaching national and institutional strategies, policies and measures that will ensure a long-term systematic and strategic approach to the internationalisation of Moldovan HE and research, facilitate international relations across Moldovan universities and raise the quality and scope of international partnerships established within EHEA and ERA.

### **3.2 Specific objectives**

- 3.2.1 To develop and advance national legislative which will elevate the process of internationalisation of Moldovan higher education and research.
- 3.2.2 To build the university integrative function through institutional policies for the internationalisation of education, research, mobility and services.
- 3.2.3 To enhance institutional capacities for effective participation in large-scale international collaborations.

### **3.3 Total cost of the project**

EC Grant: 778.194 EUR

### **3.4 Outputs**

- 1. National strategy of internationalisation of higher education and research;
- 2. National standards of accreditation for joint & double degrees;
- 3. National strategy of academic mobility and recognition of degrees;
- 4. University Internationalisation strategies/each Moldovan partner;
- 5. University guidelines for academic recognition of degrees and mobility periods/ each Moldovan partner;

6. University strategies for increasing the quality and scope of academic mobility/ each Moldovan partner;
7. University guidelines for recruitment of foreign PhD students, teachers and researchers/ each Moldovan partner;
8. University Action plan for participation in the European Research Area / each Moldovan partner;
9. Recommendations for university research project management and talents development
10. Online benchmarking tool of internationalisation of higher education and research.

### 3.5 Coordinator contact details

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<i>Institution</i>	Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova/ Centre for European Integration Studies (CSEI.ASEM)
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<i>Phone</i>	+373 22 402834

## 4. PROJECT'S MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

**The management structure** of the ELEVATE is based on vast managerial experience of all partners gained through the implementation of various projects funded by the EU and adjusted to fit the needs and recommendations of the Erasmus+ programme. The role of all management bodies is to provide efficient and successful realization of planned activities.

The project management structure is established to ensure effectiveness, decisiveness, flexibility and quality of work. It involves the Contractor, the Coordinator, a Strategic Steering Committee, a Project Support Team and Quality Assurance Project Team, as shown in point 5, below. The actualized version please find on the project web page [www.elevate-project.md](http://www.elevate-project.md)

**The Contractor** – The contractor (Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova in this case) is legally and financially responsible for administering the project grant, drawing the attention of all partners to contractual rules and to releasing money only for the purposes allowed by contract.

**The Coordinator** - As the coordinator also represents the contractor, his/her responsibility is to manage, coordinate and monitor the project activities and with regard to timetable, assess achievement of the planned endpoints and coordinate appropriate records of activities.

**Strategic Steering Committee** – the Committee contains the Executive Board which including all leaders of the work packages (6 members) and Consortium Board which is formally appointed at the kick-off meeting (along with persons replacing them in case of their absence) and usually they are contact persons from each partner institution. The Strategic Steering Committee will meet twice a year and jointly review and decide on any necessary contingency measures in reorganization tasks and resources.

**Project Support Team** – Project Support Team consists of the members of the Contractor and it provides financial and technical assistance for day-to-day management to the Project Coordinator.

**Quality Assurance Project Team** – The team acts as a support to the project coordinator in the process of overall internal monitoring. In order to contribute to the efficient project management, the team will develop the Quality control and monitoring strategy.

**Site Managers** – Site Managers (contact persons) are in charge of local project management supported with their local teams, in consultation with the Coordinator.

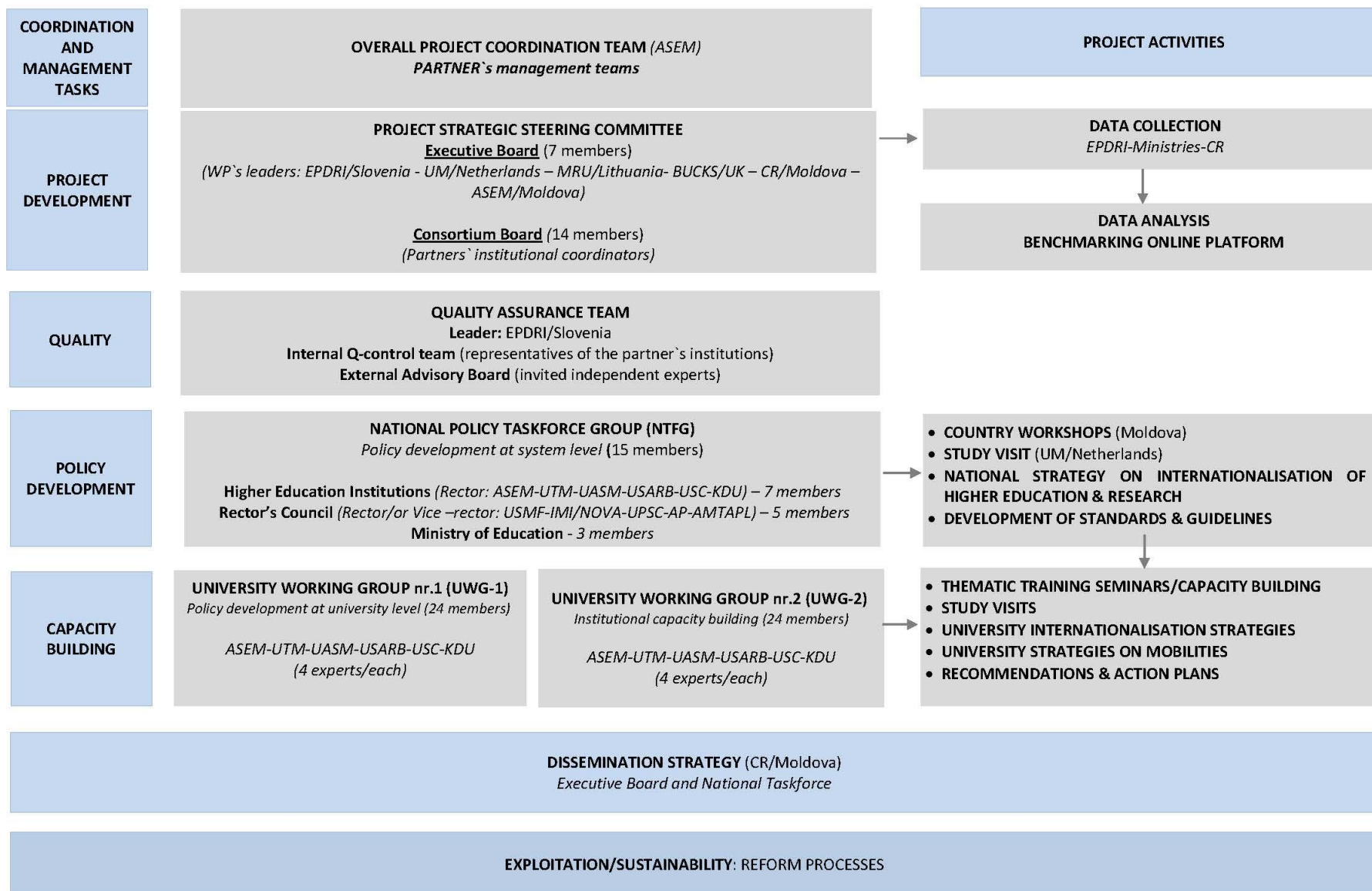
**WP leaders** – WP leaders have the responsibility for coordination of individual WP (with the help of task leaders) and monitoring deliverables and planned milestones related to their WP.

**Task leaders** – Task leader are responsible for the management and coordination at the level of Activities.

## **5. PROJECT'S BODIES**



## ELEVATE PROJECT'S BODIES



## **6. PROJECT'S DELIVERABLES**

WPs Nr.	WP's TITLE/ LEADER	DELIVERABLES	Task Leader	DEADLINE (as in the application form)
WP1 (PREP)	Data collection and analysis  <u>Leader: EPDRI/ Slovenia</u>	1.1. Methodology for data collection & analysis 1.2. Completed surveys (data collection) 1.3. Interview memos (data validation) 1.4. Country profiles (data analysis) 1.5. IoHE online benchmarking tool	1.1. EPDRI 1.2. CR 1.3. ASEM 1.4. EPDRI 1.5. ASEM	30.12.2016 15.03.2017 31.03.2017 1.07.2017 14.09.2017
WP2 (DEV1)	Development and advancement of national legislative for internationalis ation  <u>Leader: UM.MGSoG Netherlands</u>	2.1. Know-how on national legislative underpinning internationalisation transferred to Moldova 2.2. Standards for accreditation of joint and double degrees in Moldova formulated and adopted 2.3. National strategy on academic mobility and recognition of degrees developed 2.4. National strategy on IoHE and research developed. 2.5. National benchmarks for outgoing and incoming mobility developed	2.1. ASEM  2.2. UM.MGSoG & ASEM  2.3. EPDRI & CR  2.4. EPDRI & KDU 2.5. EPDRI & MERM, UTM, USARB	30.06.2017  31.05.2018  30.06.2018  30.06.2018 31.05.2019
WP3 (DEV2)	Advancement of university integrative function through internationalis ation <u>Leader: MRU/ Lithuania</u>	3.1. Models of internationalisation from EU partners identified, transferred and implemented at Moldovan HEIs 3.2. Internationalisation strategies at Moldovan partner HEIs developed and adopted 3.3. University strategies for increasing the quality and scope of academic mobility adopted	3.1. ASEM  3.2. UTM  3.3. KDU, MRU, EPDRI	14.09.2018  14.09.2018  14.09.2018

WP4 (DEV3)	Enhancement of institutional capacities for participation in large-scale international collaborations  <u>Leader: BUCKS/ United Kingdom</u>	4.1. Training of staff from MD HEIs to participate in large-scale international collaborations organized	4.1. BUCKS	14.07.2018
		4.2. Conditions for the recruitment of foreign PhD students, teachers and researchers defined	4.2. UASM	14.05.2019
		4.3. Action plan for participation in the European Research Area (ERA) elaborated	4.3. ASEM	14.09.2019
		4.4. Set of recommendations for university research project management & talents development elaborated	4.4. ASEM, USC, TR	14.09.2019
WP5 (QPN)	Quality plan <u>Leader: EPDRI/ Slovenia</u>	5.1 Internal Quality reports	5.1. EPDRI	14.10.2019
		5.2 External Evaluation reports	5.2. EPDRI	14.10.2019
		5.3 Fine-tuning of university procedures and regulations	5.3. CR	14.09.2019
WP6 (DISS)	Dissemination & Exploitation <u>Leader: CR/ Moldova</u>	6.1 University and National campaign on IoHE in Moldova	6.1. CR	14. 09.2019 14.10.2019
		6.2 Campaign for promotion of Moldovan HE & research on EHEA & ERA	6.2. EPDRI	
		6.3 Project website	6.3. ASEM	1.09.2019
WP7 (MNG T)	Management <u>Leader: ASEM/ Moldova</u>	7.1. Project coordination performed	7.1. ASEM	14.10.2019
		7.2. Project financial management performed	7.2. ASEM	14.10.2019

Deliverables in chronological order with the updated deadlines can be downloaded from the project's webpage [www.elevate-project.md](http://www.elevate-project.md) (tag PROJECT's DETAILS\_TIMELINE)

## **7. CONTRACTUAL AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

### **7.1. Payment arrangements**

Beneficiaries are obliged to use the Erasmus+ grant contribution exclusively for the purposes defined by the project, and in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Grant and Partner Agreement and its annexes.

The Erasmus+ grant amounts received in advance and not used by the beneficiaries must be reimbursed to the coordinator at the latest 30 days after the end of the project's contractual period.

If there is a difference between the amount of the Erasmus+ grant contribution actually used by the partnership and the amount of expenditure declared eligible by the Executive Agency at the end of the project, the following procedure will apply:

- ***The beneficiary responsible for the expenditure declared ineligible will reimburse the corresponding amount to the coordinator.***

The costs of financial transfers shall be borne as following:

- ***The costs of dispatch charged by the bank of the coordinator and costs of repeated transfers caused by one of the parties will be charged to the beneficiary.***

The coordinator will transfer the part of the Erasmus+ grant contribution corresponding to each individual beneficiary in the Partner Country (Republic of Moldova) using the new account for the project in Moldovan lei. The transfer of money will be executed in the national currency, Moldovan lei (MDL).

The coordinator will transfer the part of the Erasmus+ grant contribution corresponding to each individual beneficiary in the Programme Country (United Kingdom, Netherlands, Slovenia, and Lithuania) using new account for the project in EUR.

The transfer of the Erasmus+ grant contribution to individual beneficiaries will be implemented in accordance with the following timetable and procedure:

### **7.2. Remuneration modalities for staff cost**

The ELEVATE project remuneration of staff involved in the project is based on the rules set out by the Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission in the Grant Agreement and accompanying Guidelines for the Use of the Grant of the Erasmus+ CBHE call 2016 (art.3.3.1.1., pag.29).

The amount of staff costs that can be reimbursed to a partner institution for staff involved in the project is limited to the maximum indicated in the budget per partner (Annex I of the Partnership Agreement) and the ceilings per staff category set out in the Guidelines for the Use of the Grant.

The staff category to be applied depends on the type of work performed in the project and not on the status or the title of the individual. The grant for staff cost is calculated by multiplying the unit cost by the total number of days spent on the implementation of the project. One working day is defined according to the applicable national legislation. Normally 7.5 Hours in the EU. Declared working days per individual will not exceed 20 days per month or 240 days per year.

The coordinator will reimburse to the beneficiary's account the costs actually incurred in accordance with the estimated budget breakdown identified under Annex I of the Partner Agreement for **staff costs**. The exception is the last reporting period when the reimbursement will be made after the final 10% balance transfer of funding from the EACEA.

Payment for work conducted for the implementation of the project will be paid in arrears after the submission of the evidence to support the request for payment within 15 days after the end of the Period for which the report is being sent (see Chapter "Technical and Financial reporting"). The beneficiary will provide the receipt for the amount requested.

For the calculation of the amount to be reimbursed the following must be produced:

- 1) Scanned copy of the **Contract of Employment** covering the period in which claim is being made. The contract of employment should be sent for the First Period only if it is a permanent contract. This could be either an existing contract or a document signed by the Legal Representative stating that the person is employed in the organization from the date to – permanent -. If it is a temporary contract then the period of employment must be clearly stated (From-date to date). Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.
- 2) Scanned copy of the **Time-Sheet** where the activities conducted are described. (The template is available on the project's webpage in the Consortium space tag). Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.
- 3) Scanned copy of the **Joint Declaration** form dully completed. (The template is available on the project's webpage in the Consortium space tag. Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.

### 7.3. Reimbursement modalities for travel and costs of stay

This budget heading contributes to the costs of travel and stay for staff\* and students participating in activities directly related to the achievement of the project. These costs are covered on the basis of unit costs (see section 3.3 of the Guidelines for the Use of the Grant).

*\* The existence of a formal employment relationship between the employee and the beneficiary institutions is required in order to participate to any travel.*

The unit costs to be applied are those defined in Annex I of the Partnership Agreement. Prior written authorisation from the Agency is required for activities and their corresponding travel costs and costs of stay which are not taking place in or between countries represented in the partnership.

Any category of staff (e.g. managers, RTT, technical and administrative staff) under official contract with the beneficiary institutions and involved in the project may benefit from financial support for travel and subsistence provided it is directly necessary to the achievement of the objectives of the project.

Except in the case of existence of a national law which states the contrary, beneficiary institutions should not suspend payment of normal salaries to their staff during time spent travelling within the framework of the project.

The coordinator will organise the travel and will cover the travel cost in the limits indicated in the Partner Agreements.

The coordinator will pay in cash 100% of the estimated Erasmus+ grant contribution (in EUR) **for cost of stay** at the first day of each of mobility period indicated in the Partner Agreements.

The following supporting documents must be retained with the project accounts:

- A duly filled-in **Individual Travel Report**. Originals or scanned copies of the Individual travelling reports completed using the template available on the webpage of the project (CONSORTIUM SPACE tag). Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.
- Supporting documentation will have to be attached to each Individual Travel report:
  - Scanned copies of the boarding passes for flights or train tickets glued on a A4 white paper. This could be scanned and sent by email as digital copies. Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.
  - If dates of travelling are not shown on the travelling documents then scanned copies of invoices must be sent to the coordinator. Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years. EACEA is not interested in the cost but in the dates of the travelling to show that the participant has actually travelled during the period claimed.
  - Scanned copies of invoices for accommodation. Originals must be kept in the partner organisation for 5 years.

If the beneficiary fails to submit to the coordinator the mobility reports and the supporting documents within two month of the event, then the amount spent will be regarded as co-financing.

## 7.4. Project documents

In order to save time and labour and to facilitate the transmission of documents, partners must produce scanned copies of the documents to be submitted to the coordinator. Scanned copies, of good quality, are acceptable as official documents.

However, partners are responsible for keeping the originals and are obliged to send them by post to the coordinator or EACEA if requested.

# 8. TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

## 8.1. Basic principles of reporting

There are two main purposes of the reporting. The formal reporting, by ASEM, provides the necessary information to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) to assure them that our project is being implemented according to the Grant Agreement and that payments should therefore be released. The annual reports provide information to the PST (Project Support Team) to allow them to support project partners with implementation.

Reporting also helps us to view our progress objectively.

The annual (technical and financial) reports are linked to transfer of grant to partners from ASEM. The Final Report though must be approved by EACEA before the final payment to the coordinator is released. No report is required to secure the advance payment.

The reports should accurately reflect Project Partner (PP) progress during the reporting period, highlighting any key issues and providing justification for any deviations from the Description of the project as set out in Annex I of Grant Agreement.

It is significantly faster to prepare the technical reports if information is added to them at the time when the activity takes place. This can always be amended later but it makes sure that the



recommendations for corrective action and for improving the programme are not lost. Equally, the Work plan should be updated whenever necessary changes are identified and submitted along with the annual report if there are any changes. All changes must be justified in writing.


## 8.2. Standards of all reports

All reports should be typed and should be in English. Copy of each report and supporting documents should be provided to the PST, as well as an electronic version. The report forms are provided on the webpage [www.elevate-project.md](http://www.elevate-project.md) (Consortium space tag).

## 8.3. Reporting schedule

Project partners are required to produce two types of technical and financial reports:

Period number	From	To	Deadline for the submission of technical and financial reports
Period 1 (P1)	15.10.2016	31.03.2018	31 March 2018 ( <i>ELEVATE Interim report due on 15 Apr 2018</i> )
Period 2 (P2)	31.03.2018	30.11.2018	30 November 2018
Period 3 (P3)	30.11.2018	14.10.2019	14 October 2019


-  Reports (two in total) prepared by the Coordinator to be delivered to EACEA:
  - Intermediate Report – 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and
  - Final report – 14<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

The partner has to respect the reporting deadlines (also stated in the Partnership Agreement), and submit their Report with supporting documents on validation of expenditure to the project coordinator in due time as requested, in 10 (ten) working days. If those are not submitted to the coordinator within the set deadline, they will not be included in the progress report of the project that coordinator is responsible to deliver to the Executive Agency.

## 8.4. Partner reports

The partners' reports are linked to a payment. Information contained in the reports will be reviewed as part of the monitoring process. It is not intended that these reports will provide all the details of what is happening on the project. The reports focus on activities and results. If further details are required for clarification then PP will be contacted separately.

The Coordinator can only submit Intermediate and Final reports, as well as financial statements to the EACEA based on inputs from project partners. Therefore, in order to provide adequate information on the progress of the project, each Project partner has to submit the **partner report** to the Coordinator consisting of:

-  **Technical report**, describing the activities carried out and their results during the reporting period, and

**Financial report**, presenting the costs incurred during the reporting period.

The annual reports of the partners will be reviewed by PST team and approved by the Coordinator, taking into consideration following assessment criteria:

- Conformity of the expenditures with the budget of the project;
- Eligibility of the expenditures;
- Correct use of the procurement procedures, whenever required;
- Correctness and completeness of all supporting documents;
- Correctness of the calculations and applied exchange rates;
- That any changes which occurred between budget categories are eligible and justified;
- All copies of the annual reports must be signed in original by the appointed contact person of partner institution;
- Expenditures must be in conformity, including full eligibility, with the allocated Budget in the Partnership Agreement.

In case that information in Annual Report are not complete or justified, the PST team will help and make recommendations on how this situation can be rectified prior to the final approval of the Annual report by the Coordinator. The Report approved in this way is the basis for the transfer of next installment to the partner institution.

#### 8.4.1. Technical report

The Technical reports should provide the clear picture on the progress of project activities, time and quality of deliverables and results, to what extent the progress indicators are achieved, as well as introduction of changes into the Work plan (if any). For this purpose, the Technical report is structured as follows:

- Statistics and indicators,
- Table of achieved/planned results,
- Statement of costs incurred.

Apart from the statistical and financial information related to the reporting period, the major part of the Technical report is consisted of the **Table of achieved/planned results** (one table per workpackage), with following describing elements:

1. Activities carried out and indicators of achievement,
2. Planned activities and indicators for progress,
3. Any proposed changes (people involved, budget, remaining activities...).

EACEA has provided a template for the technical reporting:

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/beneficiaries-space/capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2016\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/beneficiaries-space/capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2016_en)

#### 8.4.2. Financial report



When preparing the Financial report, the project partners are strongly advised to use the Excel file provided by the EACEA **Final Financial Statement**, which can be found here:

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/beneficiaries-space/capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2016\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/beneficiaries-space/capacity-building-in-field-higher-education-2016_en)

### 8.4.3. Exchange Rate

The Partner financial reports should be drawn up in Euro. In case that Project Partner is from State which has not adopted the Euro as their currency, the Project Partner shall convert into Euro the amounts of expenditure presented in the cash-flow tables that correspond to the invoices in national currency. Those amounts have to be included in all other tables of the Financial report.

During the project implementation, the partner will use two exchange rates for the conversion of currencies into euros as follows:

Any conversion of actual costs into Euros shall be made at the monthly accounting rate established by the Commission and published on its web-site (<http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro>) for November 2016 until the second pre-financing is received from EACEA, after which the rate of the month of the second pre-financing must be applied.

	Exchange rate from 15 Oct 2016-	Exchange rate from date of second instalment
	<b>1€ = 21,8753 MDL</b>	Not yet applicable

### 8.5. Request for payment

The Coordinator has provided all partners with the appropriate form for issuing the transfer of funds to the partner institution – **Request for Payment** (the template available on the webpage of the project (CONSORTIUM SPACE tag)). Along with the Request for Payment, the partner has to submit the report whose approval will be the basis for issuing the next installment. Deadlines for submitting the Partner Reports are given in section 7.3 of this Manual.